With approximately 230,000 people with disabilities in the state of Nebraska, the need for specialized programs and support services to improve their quality of life is vital. Our mission is to be world leaders in transforming the lives of all individuals with disabilities and special health care needs, their families and communities through outreach, engagement, premier educational programs, innovative research and extraordinary patient care.

As Nebraska’s federally designated University Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service (UCEDD), the institute provides state-of-the-art services and supports across the state, and assists individuals and families in finding services in their local communities. In addition, MMI is a recipient of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (LEND) grant and Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA), and is a designated National Institutes of Health-funded Center for Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE).

MMI provides extraordinary interdisciplinary, family-centered services for persons with disabilities and complex health care needs across their lifespan. The institute trains individuals in the medical and therapeutic management of individuals with disabilities and complex health care needs through interprofessional educational experiences, outreach training and onsite technical assistance. We conduct basic, translational and clinical research with the goal to transform the diagnosis, care and treatment of individuals with all types of disabilities and complex health care needs.

MMI has 14 departments with approximately 500 employees and provides more than 50 types of clinical services. With an annual budget of over $40 million, we are present at more than 40 locations across the state and provide diagnosis and treatment to approximately 15,000 children and adults annually with greater than 70,000 clinical visits. In addition, last year our Human Genetics Laboratory performed approximately 50,000 genetic tests from samples originating from 49 states and four international locations. MMI utilizes an interdisciplinary team approach that assures a comprehensive service program. Parents, teachers, therapists and community service providers are involved in our team approach. MMI also provides statewide technical assistance and consultation to Nebraska public schools and other programs across the state that provide services to children, youth and adults with disabilities. The use of telemedicine allows the institute to provide clinical and educational opportunities within the state as well as nationally and internationally.

It is noteworthy that not all MMI clinical services are performed in our MMI facilities. We have a long and robust partnership with Omaha Public Schools and Bellevue Public Schools for psychology, physical therapy and occupational therapy, and assistive technology services, while our recreational therapy department provides programming at Westside Public Schools and Millard Public Schools. Physical therapy and occupational therapy is provided at the Children’s Respite Care Center. In addition, MMI providers provide sleep services, autism screening services, genetic medicine, genetic counseling developmental pediatrics, psychology, speech-language pathology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy to many facilities and multiple health care systems in Nebraska (Methodist Hospital, Nebraska Medicine, Children’s Hospital and Medical Center, Boys Town National Hospital, Madonna Rehabilitation Hospitals). MMI has a large network of nearly 40 behavioral health clinics in primary care practices across the state and through a long-standing partnership with the Scottish Rite there are offsite RiteCare clinics in Lincoln, Hastings, and Kearney.

Education is also a critical part of our mission. MMI has a complex educational portfolio that encompasses all of our disciplines. These include fellowships in Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Genetic Medicine, Developmental Pediatrics, Molecular Genetics, Speech-Language Pathology etc. In addition, we have an active MMI PhD program in applied behavioral analysis (ABA), and train graduate students in multiple disciplines through the Medical Sciences Interdepartmental Area (MSIA) program. Masters programs are offered in ABA in the department of Psychology (in collaboration with University of Nebraska Omaha) and genetic counseling (in collaboration with the College of Allied Health). Training Psychology, Speech-Language Pathologists, Recreation therapist interns are also a critical part of our academic activities, as well as year-long training programs through our Leadership in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities(LEND) grant. MMI provided a combined 211,749 hours of interdisciplinary training in 2018, and had 133 of long-term trainees participating in our various programs. Annually, more than 100 courses and seminars taught by our faculty and staff.
The MMI of today is also a thriving place for basic, translational and clinical research. These endeavors, in the context of intellectual and developmental disabilities, are focused on understanding gene*environment*treatment interactions, CRISPR technology development, sensory-motor processing, movement research, efficacy of behavioral treatment interventions, human genetic research, clinical drug trials, virtual reality applications and education assessment. The majority of the educational and research studies are supported through extramural funding, which totaled more than $7 million in 2018, making up 29.2% of our yearly budget. Last year our faculty, staff and student authored more than 220 scholarly publications and presentations.

Community engagement is a critical pillar of MMI. In 2018, though our more than 80 community training activities approximately 9,000 people attended workshops, conferences, teleconferences and other community education activities. Community engagement, working in close relationship with our providers and the Nebraska University Foundation, has secured nearly $2M in the last calendar year. MMI works within the local and state of Nebraska community to promote awareness and inclusion and to enable individuals with disabilities and complex health care needs to live happy and productive lives. The Institute serves as the premier source of disability-related information to scientists, care providers, clinicians, families and community leaders in the state of Nebraska, regionally, national and internationally. We improve the educational, health and community practices that impact Nebraska children and families who are at risk for adverse developmental outcomes through program evaluation, training and community outreach. MMI advocates at the local, state, federal and international level to promote best practices, policies, and/or laws on behalf of individuals with disabilities and complex health care needs and their families.

While our achievements to date are noteworthy, we can confidently state: THE BEST IS YET TO COME!